

BASIN WATER MANAGEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT OF A WHOLESALE WATER MARKET

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ABSTRACT

Increasing water demand in an arid groundwater basin in Southern California has resulted in an innovative water management program. Overdraft of the Mojave Groundwater Basin lead to adjudication of the basin and restrictions on groundwater pumping. Management of the basin had to adapt to changing conditions and rapidly depleting water resources. Over a period of several years, the Watermaster for the basin required cutbacks in pumping in order to balance water supply and demand. In recent years, increasing urban demand and reduced agricultural demand has lead to a water market approach where water rights, on an annual basis and on a permanent basis can be bought and sold. Development of the water market has helped encourage water conservation and allows stakeholders such as cities, farmers, and industries in the basin to work cooperatively.

PALAVRA-CHAVE: water market, adaptive water governance, adaptive water management